

FRIDAY SERMON

20th December 2024

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Today we will continue with the Question-and-answer session going on between Professor Bragge and the Promised Messiah(as). The Professor asked:

Question: Do you believe in evolution? Meaning, do you believe that man has evolved from an inferior state to a superior state? It kept advancing first from being a snake and scorpion etc. to become a monkey and then evolved from the monkey to become a human being. Moreover, when did the soul come into existence?

Answer: The Promised Messiah (as) said:

I do not believe that man was a monkey at some point in time, but then, gradually, its tail came off and it also lost the fur, and he became human through successive steps. This is a claim and the burden of proof lies upon its claimant. He should bring forth a monkey that should gradually evolve into a human being.

How can I believe in such unsubstantiated stories and fables? I do believe that there have been many Adams. What we observe every day in the prevailing circumstances, is that a human being is born from a human being. No one has ever seen a man born from a monkey nor a monkey born from a man. This is a fictional story. A species is always born from its own species. God has put His law right in front of our eyes: a donkey comes from a donkey, a horse from a horse, and a monkey from a monkey. If someone claims otherwise that a human being is born from a monkey as well, he should present the proof for his claim. To assert that it could have happened, means nothing. Conjecture is not enough.

Allah the Exalted has given us this observation as evidence in support of our claim. Those who say otherwise should present some clear evidence. Mere conjectures and claims don't prove anything. The soul is a created thing. God brings it into being also from this same physical matter. (I have discussed this at length in my latest book, *Chashma-e-Ma'arifat*.) The human soul exists within the human seed itself in an innate and concealed form. It develops with it gradually and becomes evident towards the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth month with a manifest change and development, as is mentioned by Allah the Exalted in His Holy Word:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُنَّ خُلُقًا خَلَقًا آخَرَ

It is not true, as claimed by the Aryas, that the soul is also—like God—eternal. This belief raises so many questions, that God no longer remains God at all. The soul is a most subtle essence that is born and goes on developing mysteriously with the conception of man. For example, consider the fruit of a fig tree. When it is raw, it has incomplete but living insects in it. As soon as it ripens, these insects can be seen moving about till they eventually fly once they acquire wings. Besides it, there are fruits of many other trees that provide similar observations. In short, I have proof for my claim. A proven reality cannot be denied. These fruits have a certain type of essence within them, which matures and develops with the growth and development of the fruit.

Question: The followers of spiritualism believe that life came from the moon and intellect from mars—that the moon was part of the earth; that, in the beginning, the earth was very soft and a piece of it flew off and became the moon; that, in fact, life originated from the earth itself. From here it went to the moon and then it descends from the moon into man. What do you believe regarding this matter?

Answer: The Promised Messiah (as) said:

“I believe in the effects of the moon, the sun, and the planets. Man, benefits from them. They affect a child even in the womb of his mother. This is not against the Shariah and this is why I have no objection in accepting them. The effect of moonlight upon plants is clearly evident. They become plump and sweet on account of it. Sometimes people have heard noises of pomegranates cracking, which occurs under the influence of moonlight. Anything beyond this, which is complicated and unproven, I am not ready to accept it. It is clearly mentioned in the Holy Quran that the moon, the sun, and all the planets are useful servants of man and beneficial. And there are benefits for man centered in them.

Therefore, I see no harm in accepting that—as we benefit from plants, so do we benefit from the planets as well. I am also willing to accept that intellect has a connection with Mars if it can be proven.”

Upon hearing this, the worthy professor said: ‘I believed that there is a great deal of conflict between science and religion, as is generally acknowledged by religious scholars, but you have resolved this conflict altogether.’

The Promised Messiah (as) said:

“This is exactly what my mission is and this is what I have been proving that there is absolutely no conflict between science and religion. Rather, religion is in complete accord with science. And no matter how much science advances, it will never be able to show that the teachings of the Holy Quran and the principles of Islam are false.”

Question: “The thing that is found in flies and other lower types of animals, what should it be called?”

Answer: “The soul is of three types: the soul of plants, the soul of animals, the soul of human beings. I do not believe these three to be equal. Among these, only the human soul is the inheritor of true life and comprehending all excellences. The plant and animal soul also

possesses a kind of life, but it cannot equal the human soul, nor can it attain such ranks, nor can it attain equality with the human soul in excellences.

I do not deem it proper to enter the debate about the subtle similarities it may have. It is possible that in some very specific attributes these souls may have some similarities with the human soul, but just as there is an obvious variance and difference physically between man and them, there is also a spiritual difference with them.

Nevertheless, it has even been accepted that there is a kind of awareness in some plants. If a bamboo tree is planted under a roof, it changes direction when it reaches a foot or two from the roof, it would change its direction and start to grow in a different direction. There is another botanical plant called ‘touch me not’ in the Punjab. It shrinks as soon as it is touched by a human. These things are mentioned in older and reputed books of natural sciences and are also proven by experience. However, one should not pursue such things too much. How appropriate is the couplet:

Have you managed to set aright all worldly affairs?

That now you have turned your attention to heavenly matters?

To squander time by indulging into the investigation of the minutest of details of these matters is not appropriate.

Question: One day I went to the church. There, the priest said in his lecture that, ‘Man is a very insignificant creature and a filthy worm. It falls lower and lower on a daily basis and is not even fit to make progress. That is indeed why God gave His only Son by way of expiation to save him from sin and for his salvation.’

However, I know that man can make progress in virtue. At this time if this child of mine does something wrong due to ignorance, after a while, with more wisdom and knowledge, he will realize on his own that this was a bad deed. He will abandon it and do good. What is your belief in this matter?

Answer: The Promised Messiah (as) said: ‘Man is virtuous, and can perform virtuous deeds. He has been given the faculties to make progress. Man can attain salvation by making progress in piety.’

Question: These people [Christians] say that a person can do all the good deeds in the world, but he is ruined unless he believes in the Atonement through Christ. What do you say in this matter?

Answer: A person needs action and effort. There is no need for the Atonement. The spiritual system is akin to the physical system. In the physical system, consider the example of a farmer. With great effort he prepares the land, sows the seed, and waters it. Does he need any atonement? No! He needs hard work and action. I do not believe at all that there is no way for salvation except through Atonement. In fact, Atonement is an obstacle and an obstruction in the path of human progress. Purity means that a person should not succumb to his carnal passions that want him to turn away from God and indulge in his selfish desires, and that he should try to make his conduct correspond to the pleasure of God so much so that he utters no word and commits no deed except that it be with the pleasure of God.

Allah is Holy and Pure. He desires that man should tread the path that is in accord with His attributes. He is Merciful and expects man to be merciful. He is Beneficent and expects to see beneficence in man. The attributes of God are manifest in the law of nature. We see that physically this world has existed for a very long time. He has always provided everyone with food, water, clothing, light, etc. and all the other essential requirements and human needs. His attributes of Mercifulness and Graciousness and the demands of His other marvelous attributes have always sustained His creation. Thus, what God desires is to make man a reflection of His attributes.

After this, the professor and the lady thanked the Promised Messiah (as) and said, “We are thankful that you allowed us the honour of this conversation and made a valuable contribution to our knowledge. Our time was well spent.”

Here ends this Question-and-answer session. There is no doubt that the answers given by Hazrat Masih Maood(as) definitely enlighten us about several ideas concerning the evolution of mankind on earth. He does not thoroughly reject the idea evolution. He asked for the proof of evolution from those who make this claim. Anyhow we may say that this exchange between a westerner and the Promised Messiah(as) was quite an interesting one.

Later on in the same Volume of Malfuzaat we have some comments of Mufti Muhammad Sadiq on this encounter between him and Hazrat Masih Maood(as). It is written:

“In today’s discussion, Mufti Sahib submitted to the Promised Messiah (as) that: “After meeting with the Promised Messiah, Professor Wragge has experienced a tremendous change in his ideas. In the past, when he used to show pictures of heavenly bodies or Jesus on the cross, he would say,

“This is the picture of the Messiah who, out of mercy for this world, presented his own life to God for the sins of the entire world, and he proved his perfect love and mercy for the world by atoning for their sins.”

But now, after his meeting with the Promised Messiah (as), when he gave a lecture, he showed the picture of Jesus on the cross and only uttered these words: “This picture can be the source of happiness to the Christians, but true praise and glory belong only to the One Supreme God”

In the past, he used to say in his lectures that humans evolved gradually from lower life forms to the monkey and then from the monkey to becoming a human being, but this time in his lecture, he clearly admitted that this was Darwin’s claim and is not worthy of acceptance. Man has evolved in his own right. In short, there has been a great impact on him and he has become a new person after meeting with the Promised Messiah (as). He now presents these views with courage.’

May Allah help us all and may He always keep us all under the Shadow of His Mercy. Ameen !